

Editorial.

The general order right now should be to renew. We have a large and growing list of subscribers who never permit their names to be erased from the books. They are the stay and support of this paper. Can't the list be largely increased.

RETROSPECT.

With this issue we close Vol. 7 of the Record. Seven years of very hard work have passed since the writer entered upon the untiring task of editing a paper. It may be both pleasing and instructive to glance back over the past.

This paper was called into existence by the Convention for a purpose. Not simply to have a paper, but to accomplish a work. The writer was chosen to be editor, we suppose, because of his well known sympathy with the purposes of the Convention.

We wish to say that the foundation of whatever success has been achieved by this paper, in our judgment, was laid by Bro. Lowrey, as editor of the Mississippi Department of the *Tenn. Baptist*. His unflinching devotion to Mississippi institutions, and his conservatism, were a break-water against radicalism, and a spirit of radicalism, which has desolated the Southwest for many weary years. Gen. Lowrey died in the most dangerous period in our history, and it gives us great pleasure to make mention of his services in this connection.

When we entered upon the duties of editing this paper, the whole Southwest was under the influence of a leadership, which, by the extreme measures, personal controversies and visionary schemes had well nigh destroyed, not only almost every Baptist enterprise in the area of its blighting influence, but had largely destroyed the confidence of the brotherhood in each other, and in the success of Baptist enterprises.

The tendency was to create distrust of our general Boards by crying centralization, church independence, etc. One denomination after another had gone down, carrying with them tens of thousands of Baptist money, which did no one but the managers any good. The whole territory was a battle field. The world, the flesh and the devil had a share, but, mainly, the brethren took the brunt of the battle.

Gen. D. Pruitte, in describing Brownlow said, "He can not even pray without calling on the Almighty to take notice what a set of rascals the Baptists are." We had a school of writers who never set up their institutions or doctrines on merit alone, but always by opposing somebody else. Every discussion must end in a personal attack. No man's character was high enough to shield him from the most violent attacks, if he stood in the way. The leading paper in this region was from years in to years end full of personal wars. This school of writers, then dominant, used their brethren as chopping blocks. Church difficulties were dragged before the public, and the blood of the denomination constantly stirred by these unseemly personal strifes. The tendency for a long time was to train preachers, rather than a company of workers. Fighting, not building was the order of the day. Then there were questions, and no end to them, questions of no practical importance, magnified into large proportions. These were constantly generating strife, rather than godly edifying.

We started out with a distinct purpose to bring the denomination, as far as in us lay, to a different way of thinking and acting. The spirit of distrust of our Boards, we have smitten with all our power, and on every available occasion. We have believed that no great thing could be done by the Baptists of the Southwest until this evil spirit, which had put us behind all other sections, was cast out. Personal attacks on the character of brethren, we have deprecated, and when brethren have sought to use these columns for such purposes, their communications have been subjected to the purifying power of baptism in fire. The belittling business of discussing little, curious questions, we have rated very low, and on the other hand, we have sought to bring to the front the great and living questions of judgment, truth and righteousness. The new doctrines we have thought to be most excellent to let alone. Some good brethren have thought we ought to walk off to new positions in new shoes, but we have not seen the good of any of it. The old positions are bet-

ter. "What is new is not true, and what is true is not new," is an old Baptist saying, and we believe it, so far as it relates to doctrines.

The seven years just passed have been constructive years. Our State Mission work, the College and the Convention work generally were understood.

Under many difficulties the construction has gone forward, till to day we have one of the most united States in the South. Confidence reigns among the brethren. The development has been no less striking. The direction of the denomination has been changed, so much so, that the man who can tell us how to build a school or send the gospel to Africa, is much more in demand than one who has something about Melchisedec. Moreover, extreme men can no longer direct affairs in Mississippi, or even influence them.

The Convention is composed of a large, intelligent, sound, sensible, conservative body of men, who, in the language of Bro. Booth, "mean business."

Now, we do not claim that we have alone wrought these salutary changes. First, and foremost, the way was made ready for the Record. The due time had arrived. And in the second place, the Record has had the help, the strong and unflinching backing up of the ablest and best men in the State. We only claim that we have kept the prow of the ship in the right direction, and contributed what we could. One thing no one will deny; we have boldly spoken out on all these questions. And in this we may rejoice. The policy of the Record has been approved by an overwhelming majority of the ablest and best Baptists in this State. There are many minor questions about which there are differences; but the great current is all in one direction.

Nor could we close this retrospect without bearing testimony to the almost uniform kindness of the great and royal brotherhood, whom we have tried to serve. Surely there are no better people anywhere.

These seven years close, practically, the constructive work in Mississippi. The College, State Missions, etc., have their place in the hearts of the people. Unification is an assured fact, the General Association excepted. As never before, we can set ourselves to build steadily on the foundation.

The growth and success of the Record, financially and otherwise, have been in keeping with the general advancement of the cause in its territory. Those who have feared its aggressive spirit, lest it should alienate brethren have not had their fears realized. Holding the ship firmly to its course, while it has been under fire from every side, the favoring winds of heaven have borne it in safety into the port of Good Success. Here we raise our Ebenezer, and with a heart full of gratitude to God and the brethren, we face the future.

THE CORNERSTONE OF THE BAPTIST ELEMENTARY AND HIGH SCHOOL, LAGOS, AFRICA.

The following account of the laying of the cornerstone of our African Mission School Building, we clip from the Lagos Observer: Pursuant to circulars recently issued, the cornerstone of the Baptist Elementary and High School Building was laid, last Thursday, by His Excellency, the Lieutenant Governor.

The proceedings commenced with singing, after which, prayer was offered by Rev. M. J. Elliott, (Wesleyan.) The Rev. W. J. Davidson, Superintendent of the Lagos Baptist Mission, gave an introductory address, explanatory of the uses for which the building was intended. It will be two stories, is five feet long and four wide, respectively. The end of the building, which has been razed, with a porch, ten feet long in front. The lower floor will be appropriated to the use of the Elementary School, while the advanced classes will be taught in the upper floor. A retrospective glance at the country, and it was in 1853 that missionaries were sent out to organize a mission. Thence up to the time the mission met with a collapse, twenty-three men and women had been sent out as missionaries. The start indeed was bold, but fatal was the end—consequent on the American war, which devastated and impoverished the Southern States, the fountain source of their Yoruba mission. As a matter of course, with the gradual lack of funds, there was moving, *par passu*, until 1867 the out-break at Abeokuta, seemed to give the death blow. The Rev. gentleman sent a most thrilling peroration into the hearts of the whole audience, awaking sad recollections of the brave and energetic missionaries

of this connection, who had labored here in the past, but who are now lying—alas!—in their mission yard in Lagos, under the stones of Abeokuta, or beneath the ruins of Ibadan. The speech ended, a bottle, in which were a copy each of the local papers, a copy of a foreign missionary journal, and a report, was handed to His Excellency, who after depositing it, and performing the attendant ceremonies, declared the stone well and truly laid. Just a breathing space, and His Excellency, amidst long-continued cheers, rose to address the meeting. His speech was masterly, interesting and brief. He contrasted the history of the Baptist missionary operations in the Yoruba country with the history of life, an alternation of hope and fears, but with the determined purpose of never to give in. He has always sympathized with the experiences and efforts of missionaries, and most unreservedly recognized and acknowledged their labors in the great changes that have taken place in the Lagos of to-day, as contrasted with the Lagos of twenty years ago. He did not hesitate to remark, that in the whole coast, there was no place in which we met with so many places of worship represented by the different missionary societies as in Lagos, (although he must not omit himself, as he said, "I am a Baptist.") A few more remarks brought His Excellency's speech to a close. In remembrance of the occasion, he was presented with a beautiful morocco-bound, gilt-edged Baptist Hymn Book. After the singing of a hymn, (Capt. Yates, agent of Messrs. Yand & Potterfield, an American firm, having a vote of thanks to His Excellency; this was seconded by Rev. J. B. Wood, (C. M. S.) and unanimously signified to by the audience in the accustomed manner. While the 181st hymn in the Baptist hymn book, was being sung, the plates were passing round, and we doubt not, but that the audience acted practically to the conclusion drawn from one of His Excellency's remarks, the words: "We are better than the even—*evils*," the guineas were better than the pounds.

The benediction by the Rev. J. B. Wood brought this short but interesting meeting to a close.

INFANT REGENERATION.

I notice in your issue of Nov. 19, 1883, that a Lagoon Baptist says that infants, in order to be saved, must first be regenerated. This was endorsed by the *Christy Journal*, and the editor of the Record. I recollect some years past, while in Anite City, La., of hearing L. S. Piker say that "children are born in this world condemned." I did not then, nor do I now believe such doctrine, although the idea is advanced by many noble divines.

I love the Record and its editor, and am strengthened by the many good things that I find in its columns, and will take the opportunity of its readers, answer a few questions for my benefit and that of others.

1. What did Christ accomplish for fallen man, when he came into this world? "I come," says Christ "not to destroy or to do away the law, but to fulfill the law."

2. Did he do this? Did Jesus pay it all?

3. If so where is condemnation to be found in an innocent babe, that was born in the morning and passed away at noon? We ask in all candor what has that innocent soul done, that it must be regenerated in order to salvation?

4. David says he was born in sin and brought forth in iniquity. That is true, and so it is with the whole of mankind. But only so far as the flesh—this body was concerned which never was redeemed by Christ; and we as Christians can only keep it under subjection by the grace of God.

5. Then I ask what class of people did Christ have reference to when he said, "I come not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Who was the right class then? There must have been such a class then, and if so there must be now. And is not the gospel with the spirit of God his call to sinners now, as it was then.

Your South Florida readers will appreciate any attention that you may give this subject.

Palma Sol, Fla. A. R.

ANSWERS.

We shall not make formal answers to all these questions. The respected brother is a devout minister of the gospel, and we know is ever an earnest seeker after truth. In a matter like this we must take care not to confound things which are distinct. Regeneration is one thing, Justification is another thing. The former is a work done in our hearts by the gracious spirit of God, renewing our nature and bringing us in our affections into harmony with God. Justification is that divine act, whereby God, in consideration of the work and death of his Son declares us guiltless before the Law. It is done, not in us, but for us simply. Regeneration effects our nature; Justification effects our standing with the law. Let us keep these things in mind.

Confessedly not much is revealed in the Scriptures about the dealings of God with infants. Almost nothing is directly said about them. The reason is obvious: The Bible is to guide those who can act for themselves. But we think natural depravity is declared of the whole race. Writing to Christians, Paul said they were by nature children of wrath even as others. Depravity must be true; we see all children exhibiting the evil natures as soon as they begin to act.

It is said that the wicked are "estranged from the womb," and that "they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies." Thus Scripture and observation, to say nothing of experience, testify to the fearful doctrine of natural corruption of nature.

John 3:3 correctly translated reads: "Except any one be regenerated from above, he can not see the kingdom of God." This affirms the universal necessity of renewing in order to enjoying the kingdom of Heaven. And this is what we are convinced must be. Think of a vast multitude of people in Heaven with natures after the image of Adam, with depravity still inherent. Would it really be Heaven?

The death of Christ is the ground upon which God justifies. He did, indeed, pay it all, but while the nature of infants is what it is, God must be displeased with it, just as he is displeased with the corrupt nature of adults for whom Christ died. How he regenerates infants we do not know; any more than we can tell how he regenerates adults. He does it by his almighty power, sovereignly exercised.

It is a subject upon which we write with caution; but nothing shall ever enter the saint's everlasting rest, which loveth and maketh a lie. And infants with their Adamic natures would do that. They do it here.

DIVISION OF LABOR.

One man in any calling can do little by himself. Combinations are essential to large results. While the New Testament Scriptures emphasize individual responsibility, they also, emphasize the necessity of co-operation. Churches are designed to promote co-operative effort among Christians, to accomplish what could not be done by individuals acting apart. But we have Apostolic example for co-operation on a still wider scale.

When the poor saints at Jerusalem were in distress, Paul pleaded in himself by making a personal contribution only, which would have amounted to but little, nor did he appeal simply to his own church, he took an agency to raise a fund from the Gentile churches, and commensurate with the wants of the distressed brethren. A careful study of the case will show that Paul was the first agent, that he sought not by the authority of an organization above the churches, but by appeals to the Christian hearts of the brethren, to bring them into a general co-operation for a worthy purpose.

There is another lesson to be gleaned from the Apostle's conduct, i.e., the division of labor. He wrote ahead to have collections made that there might be no gathering when he came. His was the general gathering up of the offerings from all the churches; it was theirs to gather in from the individuals. He says, "that there be no gathering when I come." From this we may know, that if they failed, he would not pass them over, but take the collection, even as our agents must, do now.

The necessity for co-operation in order to the greatest good is still imperative. It may be said that a brother or a church has the right not to co-operate with any Christian enterprise. Very well; but he must exercise that prerogative in the fear of the Lord. We shall give account for the way we use our liberty, and clearly the nations can not hear the gospel except by co-operation on the part of churches. What church in Mississippi would ever send a missionary to Asia or Africa? We might ask what Association would do it? Without doubt more can be done on our present plan. And the same may be said of every branch of Christian work among us. It takes a pretty wide and general co-operation to support the work of the College and to give momentum to the State Mission Work, as to insure great and glorious results. After years of dinging this into the ears of our people they have about come to accept it. Nobody now is opposed to co-operation; or to agents, or nobody, at least opposes these. We have taken a good step forward. What next?

The necessity of a division of labor in co-operation. We are ready for that question. We must take it up and come to understand it. Now look here, brother, what do you think would become of our Foreign Mission Work without some body at Richmond to receive the money, to write receipts, to give information, to forward money to the missionaries, in short, to manage the business? You say it would go to pieces. You are right. Answer this question now; what will become of it, if Dr. Tupper must leave his office and go out to see all the Baptists in the South, and get their contributions from a nickle up? You say we would have to bring the work down to a few missionaries. You are right again. And another question: if all the pastors would do their part

in teaching and collecting, what then? Ah! we would be getting along to-day! The Millennium and the glory of the last days would soon come. That is division of labor.

Let us come nearer home. Sect. Leavell was in this office a few days since. He is very cheerful about the College. The \$2,500 needed between now and September next is more than he can raise by himself. But there are twenty-five, or thirty, or forty, or fifty pastors who can raise it easily enough, and he can do another much needed work. Division of labor is what is needed.

The same thing may be said in effect of State Missions. Secretary Ball is needed to wisely manage the growing work. He cannot visit 700 or 800 churches. Very much, and more and more, the collecting must be done by the pastors and others on the field. This is division of labor. Pastors may often very profitably, divide up the collecting among the brethren and sisters. We are sorry for the pastor who has not learned the value of a division of labor in the church. Why, God meant division of labor when he gave some pastors, and some teachers, etc.

Well, to close up, the things to emphasize in Mississippi are now organization and division of labor, and this does not mean that things will run by themselves, or without a head; it means larger and better work, without killing a few men? It means every one standing in his proper place, every one about the camp and every one working in his place, according to the measure of his ability. The full meaning is the development of such an amount of force as we hardly dreamed of.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

The venerable Wm. Sloan, of Siloam, is out in Texas with his children and grand children. He writes cheerfully of God's goodness to him in preserving him so long. He expects to return after a while, but he wants to keep up with Mississippi affairs religiously, and otherwise. We have known of no other as faithful as Sloan.

I see that Dr. Hunter, of Jackson, Miss., has extended his researches on the "Baptismal Controversy" into the realm of the Baptist Record. I devoutly hope that he who has so long been a "hunter" may in this investigation become a "finder" of the truth.—E. Elder W. E. Tynes has accepted a call to Colorado City, Texas. He writes: "I feel the Lord has directed me here. It was a sore trial to give up my hope of seeing my brother and sister, but few as faithful as Bro. Sloan."

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Where will the convention be held this year? At Kosciusko. The church has taken action, and there it will be. Church communion has been reported as growing in Arkansas. It must be among Pedobaptists. Baptists in this country are all church communists, as far as we know, and always have been.—The *Clarion* and the *Record* for 1884 at \$3.00 for both.—Tennessee has three or four papers, and yet we do not see the leading ones in good works. We have known some come to run all to stalk.—Gov. Butler quit tobacco and office the same day. Now, if he will only stay quit.—Pastor Geo. B. Eager, it is said, will bring out a volume of Dr. Winkler's sermon. Let it be done, by all means. The man who spends money for tobacco and says he is not able to give any thing to missions, does not tell the truth.—Eld. W. W. Finley: Do you ever think of Mississippi? The minutes of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, which are just out, are very severely criticised. We guess there was any amount of laxness at the Convention, writing on any sort of piece of paper, and in any sort of way. One reporter was out; like as not, carried off in some brother's pocket. Our advice to the brethren is to have business done in a business way. We have tried both ways down here.—Dear Bro. Hunter: Have you anything further to say? If so, say so.—Eld. J. C. Foster sent us \$25 for Foreign Missions from the Harmony Association, and enters himself for twenty-five dollars each year as long as he can labor. A noble example.—The Carthage brethren have resolved to build them a house of worship, and not see that she is leading others in good works. We have known some come to run all to stalk.—Gov. Butler quit tobacco and office the same day. Now, if he will only stay quit.—Pastor Geo. B. Eager, it is said, will bring out a volume of Dr. Winkler's sermon. Let it be done, by all means. 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